

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 PC-10 DRC-01 /148 W

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R 240900Z AUG 74

FM AMCONSUL BUKAVU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 289

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUKAVU 0092

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS CG

SUBJ: MOUNTAIN REBELS IN SOUTH KIBU

REF: BUKAVU 91

1. I LEARNED ON AUG 23 THAT REGIONAL COMMISSIONER NDEBO GAVE VERBAL ORDERS TO REGIONAL MILITARY AUTHORITIES BEFORE LEAVING FOR KINSHASA ON AUG 15 QTE TO CLEAR LOCAL POPULATION UNQTE OUT FROM THE MOUNTAINS RUNNING SOUTH FROM BUKAVU TO BARAKA AND FIZI. APPARENTLY NO WRITTEN INSTRUCTION TO THIS EFFECT YET PREPARED.

2. THE MILITARY DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE BEGUN IMPLEMENTATION OF ORDER AS YET BUT RUMORS CIRCULATING IN THE RUZIZI PLAIN--AND PRESUMABLY IN THE MOUNTAINS AS WELL -- THAT MILITARY PLANNING SWEEP THROUGH MOUNTAINS NEAR LUVINGI AND SANGE.

3. IN MY CONVERSATION WITH ACTING MILITARY COMMANDER MUSAMBAYI ON AUG 23, HE ACKNOWLEDGED NDEBO'S ORDER BUT DISCRETELY STRESSED DIFFICULTIES IN TRYING TO EXECUTE IT. HE AVOIDED RESPONDING TO QUESTION CONCERNING PROPOSED TIMING OF POSSIBLE OPERATIONS.

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4. AMCIT MISSIONARIES WHO ARRIVED AT NUNDU--40 KILOMETERS NORTH OF BARAKA--FROM BUKAVU ON AUG 23 TOLD ME BY RADIO THAT THEY HAD SEEN NOTHING UNUSUAL ALONG ROAD SAVE TWO FAZ HELICOPTERS IN FLIGHT NEAR NUNDU. HOWEVER, LOCAL POPULATION WHEN QUESTIONED SEEMED FAMILIAR WITH HELICOPTERS AND SAID THAT THEY HAD BEEN IN AREA FOR SOME TIME.

5. COMMENT: THIS PRESUMABLY NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT REGIONAL AUTHORITIES HAVE TRIED TO ELIMINATE THE REBEL-BANDIT PROBLEM IN THE MOUNTAINS SIMPLY BY ORDERING THE FAZ TO ISOLATE AND THEN CAPTURE THE REBELS. IT SEEMS DOUBTFUL THAT THE MILITARY HAVE EITHER THE INCLINATION OR THE CAPABILITY TO RESPOND VERY EFFECTIVELY. IN AN AREA WHERE EVEN UNIMPROVED ROADS ARE RARE, THEIR LACK OF MOBILITY WOULD MAKE THEM PRIME TARGETS FOR SUDDEN HIT AND RUN ATTACKS OF THE TYPE AT WHICH THE REBELS HAVE ALREADY SHOWN THEY EXCEL. SINCE SOME OF THE MILITARY ARE KNOWN TO BE INVOLVED WITH GOLD SMUGGLING OR OTHER ACTIVITIES INVOLVING CONTACT WITH THE REBELS, THEY SEEM UNLIKELY TO PURSUE A CAMPAIGN TO WIPE THEM OUT WITH FULL VIGOR.

6. NDEBO'S ORDER DOES PROVIDE AN ELEMENT PREVIOUSLY MISSING WHICH HELPS TO EXPLAIN SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES MENTIONED REFTTEL. THE TENSION IN THE PLAIN STEMS AT LEAST IN PART FROM FEAR OF THE CURRENT INHABITANTS THAT IF THE MOUNTAIN POPULATION WAS FORCED DOWN, THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE REDISTRIBUTION OF LAND TO ACCOMMODATE THEM AND THEIR HERDS. THUS THOSE HOLDING LAND NOW WOULD PROBABLY LOSE. REDISTRIBUTION WOULD BE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT NOW AT THE HEIGHT OF DRY SEASON IN THE PLAIN THAN IN RAINY PERIOD. IF RELOCATION PLAN IMPLEMENTED, THERE WILL BE MANY PEOPLE IN SOUTH KIXU WITH A NEW GRUDGE AGAINST ALL LEVELS OF ZAIRIAN AUTHORITIES; THIS AREA WOULD MUCH PREFER BEING NEGLECTED.

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